



LISTEN UP!

CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT #636
Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Commandant: ROBERT A. SUNDLING

Editor: DON H. GEE

VOLUME XIV, Number 5

MAY 2002



**CENTRAL BUCKS
DETACHMENT, Inc. #636**
P. O. Box 1372
Doylestown, PA 18901-1372
Meets
7:30 p.m.,
2d Wednesday of Month
American Legion Post 210
315 North Street, Doylestown, PA

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Jr. VICE COMMANDANT:
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ADJUTANT:
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WIL HAAS

WEBMASTER:
TRACY BROCKMAN

MARINE OF THE YEAR:
FRANK YOHE, PC

COMMANDANT OUTLINES GOALS IN 'STATE OF THE CORPS'

In his annual "State of the Corps" address to members of the U.S. House of Representatives **Marine Corps Commandant General James L. Jones** made it clear that the direction of the Corps is "confident, clear, and unambiguous."

CMC pointed out that for six percent of the Department of Defense's budget, the Marine Corps provides twenty percent of our Nation's ground combat maneuver battalions, tactical fixed-wing aircraft squadrons, and attack helicopter squadrons, as well as one-third of its active duty combat service support.

The Commandant noted that the President's fiscal year 2003 budget will enable the Marine Corps to accomplish: continue ability to fight today's war on terrorism and to transform itself to be ready for future challenges: field pay raises and new combat uniforms for our Marines; allow for increased health care for our retirees; harness the new capabilities found in tilt-rotor technology and Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing aircraft; support for day-to-day operations, training, equipment maintenance, and force protection; improve family housing and bachelor quarters; and, invest in ground equipment, ammunition and research and development allowing for recovery in these areas from prior-year shortfalls.

"Marines have a vision for the future, and we are moving forward with the modernization and transformational efforts needed to make this vision a reality," Gen. Jones conveyed.

The Commandant described the Marine Corps' relevance to the current security environment as well as its future role as America's sea-based, expeditionary, combined-arms force. The Navy-Marine Corps Team's sea-based capabilities have been re-validated over the past several months. In Afghanistan, sea-based Naval forces provided a significant portion of tactical air sorties and the initial deployment of major, sustained ground force presence, reaching over 600 miles inland. He addressed the Marine Corps' role as the Nation's medium-weight expeditionary force, bridging the gap between America's Special Operations Forces and the Army's critical land war-winning capability.

Continuous transformation and modernization promise even greater future capabilities for the Marine Corps. Transformation is an ongoing process and spans decades of innovation and experimentation. It is also not limited to technology, but includes change in our organizational structure, operational concepts, and business practices.

The Marine Corps remains true to its warrior culture and continues in a tradition of change. The focus is on the creation of new capabilities, which will yield the operational advantages we seek to have in dealing with future conflicts.

COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Well, I managed to be late with my very first Commandant's column. Thankfully, "Gunny" Gee gave me a reprieve and held up the publication schedule just for me. Hopefully, he won't hit me with the postage or make me hand-deliver the newsletter.

I can't believe I won the election to Commandant unanimously. Oh yeah, now I remember why that happened. This coming year as Commandant may be a little rocky for me, but I'm grateful I have some very good friends whom have offered their help to get me AND YOU through it.

I managed to rearrange my work schedule to attend the Department of Pennsylvania's "Leadership School" on May 4 and would like company. I don't really need a class in leadership; I'm actually going for the food. Anyone else interested? Also, I received the information package on the Department Convention in Pittsburgh and will pass that along at our May meeting.

I'm not planning any changes, but I do have a couple of things on my agenda which I hope to address. One is getting people I miss back attending the meetings. I enjoyed our POW/MIA reports and I'm planning a visit to get him active again. **Hear that, Bill?** And people who do things with no strings attached (like those good people who donate their lots on A-Day) should be "officially" thanked with certificates or something similar showing our Detachment name.



LISTEN UP!

LISTEN UP! is the internal information publication of the **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT #636, Inc.** of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc. It is published monthly by and for the members of the Central Bucks Detachment.

My wife, **Peggy**, was thrilled (but embarrassed) with the "Distinguished Service Award" made to her at the April Meeting. Thank you, Marines (and keep up with the goodies for the deployed troops).

I'll see **EVERYONE** on May 8 when

we will be "open for official business." So, please, come out to see how much of it I get right--and, no betting, please.

Semper Fi,

Bob Sundling

U.S. Court Declares Sick Agent Orange Vets Due Retroactive Disability Benefits

A U.S. appeals court ruled last month that Vietnam veterans who contracted prostate cancer and diabetes after exposure to Agent Orange should get retroactive disability payments, setting legal precedent that could cover a wide range of illnesses associated with the toxic defoliant.

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a lower court ruling that held the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) incorrectly interpreted rules to deny retroactive payments to veterans who filed claims after early 1994.

9 Million Gallons Sprayed on Vietnam

The court's three-judge panel held that VA was bound under the terms of a 1991 consent decree to pay the benefits, in many cases back to the date the veteran first claimed them.

The ruling marked a victory for activists who have been seeking compensation and care for tens of thousands of Vietnam veterans who have fallen sick after battlefield exposure to Agent Orange, a herbicide that contains the known carcinogen dioxin.

The National Veterans Legal Services Program, which filed the initial Agent Orange suit in 1986, said the court's decision would guarantee payments to an estimated 1,200 veterans with Agent Orange-related prostate cancer, as well as thousands more who suffer from adult-onset diabetes.

In both cases, VA had sought to deny

retroactive payments on the grounds that the diseases' connection with Agent Orange was not scientifically established when payment regulations were promulgated in 1994.

Barton Stichman, the group's executive director, said the appeals court's ruling could have a wide impact by forcing the Department of Veterans Affairs to pay retroactive benefits for illnesses that future scientific research may tie to Agent Orange.

"As time goes on, as a result of additional scientific studies, it becomes clearer that other diseases are associated with Agent Orange," Stichman said. "VA is going to have to accept that the same legal theory will cover these cases."

A Department of Veterans Affairs spokeswoman said VA lawyers were reviewing the ruling and would have no immediate comment.

At least 9 million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed on Vietnam between 1962 and 1970. The chemical got its nickname from the orange stripe on the barrels in which it came.

It has been linked with 10 diseases, including lung cancer, prostate cancer and diabetes.

Scientists are also probing possible links between Agent Orange and childhood leukemia among children of veterans, while Vietnam's government has blamed Agent Orange for causing tens of thousands of birth defects in Vietnam and demanded compensation.

After Agent Orange was found to cause cancer in laboratory rats, the U.S. military suspended its use in 1970 and halted all herbicide spraying in Vietnam the following year.

Highlights

The regular meeting of the Central Bucks Detachment, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held April 10, 2002, at the Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post #210, 315 North St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 29 members present including all officers. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandants Don Gee and Don Parzanese Sr.**, **Past Commandant and Marine of the Year Frank Yohe**, and **Past Department of New Jersey Commandant Ed Hoth**.

The Minutes of the March Meeting were unanimously approved.

The **Paymaster's Report** was delivered by **Paymaster Bob Cody**. The report was unanimously accepted.

Sick Call: **Marine Herb Krout** recuperating from a stroke he suffered in his winter home in Florida. **Marine Jim Marckstein** is undergoing chemotherapy. **Marine Marvin Miller** is recuperating at home after a brief hospitalization.

OFFICER REPORTS

Commandant Budd Pearce reported the Detachment had received letters from **Army Major Anthony Wiggins** and **Sergeant First Class William H. Cassell** thanking us for our support of troops in the Middle East. He also announced he had forms for those planning to attend the 79th National Convention in Hershey, Aug. 2.

Senior Vice Commandant Bill Miller reported the Detachment strength at 58 including 19 Life Members, 34 Regular Members and 5 Associate Members. There are 2 members delinquent in their dues.

Junior Vice Commandant Don Parzanese Jr. reminded the Detachment that monies and ticket stubs for the Department Raffle are due at the June Meeting. He also reminded the members he is still seeking suggestions for the Birthday Ball.

Adjutant Gary Smith reported he had no correspondence besides what the Commandant had reported.

Judge Advocate Bob Momorella reported the Detachment had no legal problems. He also reported the Detachment's Hot Dog Cart had finally been sold and the Detachment should be receiving a check for it in the near future.

Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling reported the Detachment had received a request for the Color Guard for July 20 from **Marine Mike Waldron**. He also confirmed the Detachment has accepted an invitation to participate in a parade in Warminster on Aug. 10.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A-Day Committee Chairman Bob Momorella reminded the members that A-Day was set for the weekend of April 27-28 and that the Detachment still needed volunteers to man the parking areas for this, our major fund-raiser.

Adopt-A-Highway--Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Budd Pearce set Saturday, April 20, for the next highway clean-up. Members taking part were to meet at Tilley's Restaurant at 8 a.m. for breakfast before cleaning up the highway.

Rifle & Pistol Team--Rifle & Pistol Team Captain Bill Rosenberger reported the Detachment's Pistol Team will be participating in the Department Pistol Matches, May 31-June 2.

Young Marines--Young Marines Liaison Bob Sundling reported the Young Marines unit had a planned "Capture the Flag" weekend event in the Poconos.

Public Relations--The Public Relations Officer set April 20 as the deadline for submitting material for the May issue of "Listen Up!" **Advertising Coordinator Bob Momorella** reminded the Detachment we still need advertisers for the newsletter.

NEW BUSINESS

Commandant Pearce presented a Distinguished Service Medal and Distinguished Service Award certificate to **Peggy Sundling** for her "Operation: Enduring Support" providing a variety of books, snacks and other health and comfort items to Marines deployed in "Enduring Support."

Department Senior Vice Commandant John Moyses, Department Junior Vice Commandant Tom Tanner and **Department Southeast Division Vice Commandant Ray Devlin** installed the Detachment Officers for 2002-2003.

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE

Past Commandant Budd Pearce displayed the Detachment license plate he had acquired for the Detachment "Locker Box."

There being no further business, **Commandant Bob Sundling** adjourned the meeting until 7:30 p.m. on Wed., May 8.

WHAT IS A VET?

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye.

Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg - or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's alloy forged in the refinery of adversity.

Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem.

You can't tell a vet just by looking.

What is a vet?

He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.

He is the barroom loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel.

She - or he - is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

He is the POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn't come back at all.

He is the Drill Instructor who has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs.

He is the parade - riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.

He is the three anonymous heroes in The Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's

sunless deep.

He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket - palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being - a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.

He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, just lean over and say, "Thank You." That's all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU".

Remember May 27 Memorial Day!

"It is the soldier, not the reporter,
Who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the soldier, not the poet,
Who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the soldier, not the campus organizer,
Who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.
It is the soldier,
Who salutes the flag,
Who serves beneath the flag,
And whose coffin is draped by the flag,
Who allows the protestor to burn the flag."

Father Denis Edward O'Brien, USMC

LEE ERMEY DOLL

The 12" " Gunnery Sergeant R. Lee Ermey doll is available from [Sideshow Toy.com](http://SideshowToy.com) for \$35.00 each.

This figure not only features the likeness of Ermey but also a one-minute sound chip that barks his unique motivational advice. The figure comes with SNCO sword, sheath, and D.I.'s campaign cover.

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THE ORIGINS OF MEMORIAL DAY

Three years after the Civil War ended, on May 5, 1868, the head of an organization of former Union soldiers and sailors--the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)--established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate graves of the war dead with flowers. **MajGen. John A. Logan** declared it should be May 30. The first large observance was held that year at Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington, DC. The cemetery already held the remains of 20,000 Union dead and several hundred Confederate dead.

The ceremonies centered around the mourning-draped veranda of the Arlington mansion, once the home of **Gen. Robert E. Lee**. **Gen. and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant** and other Washington officials presided. After speeches, children from the Soldiers and Sailors Orphan Home and members of the GAR made their way through the cemetery, strewing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves, reciting prayers and singing hymns.

Local springtime tributes to the Civil War dead already had been held in various places. One of the first occurred in Columbus, MS, April 25, 1866, when a group of women visited a cemetery to decorate the graves of Confederate soldiers who had fallen in battle at Shiloh. Nearby were the graves of Union soldiers, neglected because they were the enemy. Disturbed at the sight of the bare graves, the women placed some of their flowers on those graves, as well.

Today, cities in the North and

the South claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day in 1866. Both Macon and Columbus, GA, claim the title, as well as Richmond, VA. The village of Boalsburg, PA, claims it began there two years earlier. A stone in a Carbondale, IL, cemetery carries the statement that the first Decoration Day ceremony took place there on April 29, 1866.

Carbondale was the wartime home of Gen. Logan. Approximately 25 places have been named in connection with the origin of Memorial Day, many of them in the South where most of the war dead were buried.

In 1966, Congress and **President Lyndon B. Johnson** declared Waterloo, NY, the "birthplace" of Memorial Day. There a ceremony on May 5, 1866, was reported to have honored local soldiers and sailors who had fought in the Civil War. Businesses closed and residents flew flags at half-mast. Supporters of Waterloo's claim say earlier observances in other places were either informal, not community wide or one-time events.

By the end of the 19th century, Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. State legislatures passed proclamations designating the day. The Army and Navy adopted regulations for proper observance at their facilities. It was not until after World War I, however, that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of

Congress, though it is still often called Decoration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May, as were some other federal holidays.

Many Southern states also have their own days for honoring the Confederate dead. Mississippi celebrates Confederate Memorial Day the last Monday of April, and Georgia on April 26. North and South Carolina observe it May 10, Louisiana on June 3 and Tennessee calls that date Confederate Decoration Day. Texas celebrates Confederate Heroes Day on January 19 and Virginia calls the last Monday in May Confederate Memorial Day.

Gen. Logan's order for his posts to decorate graves in 1868 "with the choicest flowers of springtime" urged: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. ...Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was approximately the same size as those that attend today's observance, about 5,000 people. Then, as now, small American flags were placed on each grave--a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. In recent years, the custom has grown in many families to decorate the graves of all departed loved ones.



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE OF PENNSYLVANIA, INC.

INCORPORATED BY AN ACT OF CONGRESS

TO: All Detachments - Department of Pennsylvania
FROM: Sally A. Bergman, Convention Committee Chairman
SUBJECT: 2002 Department Convention

The 57th annual Department of Pennsylvania Convention is scheduled to be held June 20-22, 2002 at the Holiday Inn - Greentree, Pittsburgh, PA. Make your reservations now and tell the hotel you are with the **Marine Corps League**.

Holiday Inn - Greentree
401 Holiday Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15220
(412) 922-8100

Room Rates:
\$68.00 - single-quad + tax

Reservation Deadline - June 7

As in the past, all Detachments are asked to help support the Convention book ad project. In keeping with past procedures, your Detachment has an opportunity to make some extra money and help the Department at the same time. The size of the Convention book will be 8 ½ x 11, and the rates are as follows:

| | Commercial | Detachment/Auxiliary |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| Full page | \$100.00 | \$ 75.00 |
| 1/2 page | \$ 60.00 | \$ 45.00 |
| 1/4 page | \$ 40.00 | \$ 30.00 |
| 1/8 page (business card) | \$ 25.00 | \$ 20.00 |
| Booster | \$ 5.00 | \$ 3.00 |

The difference between the Commercial rate and the Detachment/Auxiliary rate is yours to keep as a fund raiser. (For example: If you sell a full page ad for \$100, you turn in \$75 and keep \$25 as your Detachment/Auxiliary profit.)

Enclosed is an ad contract to be used for every ad sold. Please make extra copies for your convenience. When submitting your ad, you must use one of the contract forms. No verbal agreements will be recognized. Remind your members that the ads must be **CAMERA READY**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact: Paul M. Semanco, 6 South Nicholas Street, St. Clair, PA 17970-1238, or (570) 429-0537.

"Once a Marine, Always a Marine"

Class Action Members 'Carry the Day' in Federal Court

Col. "Bud" Day, counsel for Class Act Plaintiffs **Robert Reinlie** and **William O. Schism**, announced the day after the last month's hearing on Military Retiree Medical Care, it is clear the plaintiffs carried the day at the Federal District Appeals Court 12 member en banc session in Washington, DC.

Day stated that after reviewing the questions that were posed by the court members and the general thrust of the court's questions, the *en banc* panel was approaching the case the same way the three-judge panel did when they held for the plaintiffs in February 2001. Col. Day said it was a lot easier to review the case with a little time having passed, than it was the day of the hearing and in the heat of battle.

Col. Day said that his conferences with the plaintiffs, legal watchers, reporters, and Class Act members convinced him that the plaintiff's arguments overwhelmed the Department of Justice. He noted that since the court had already ruled in his favor with a long, written opinion, this 12-judge panel would probably adopt some version of that order in the very near future. Bottom line, Day says he does not see a long delay from the court in rendering their decision.

claim at \$10,000.00 for the service member, and, if the court acts favorably to his motion to include spouses as plaintiffs, \$10,000.00 for his/her spouse, if both are paying Medicare Part B premiums. Recovery could extend to costs paid for supplemental policies but we must wait for a court decision and guidance.

Several hundred retired members, reporters, fellow attorneys, and Class Act members attended the hearing. Those unable to be seated in the courtroom were able to watch and hear the proceedings in an overflow room. There was also a followup session conducted by Day after the hearing in space provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). **Phil Alpersen** from **Representative Ronnie Show's** office attended the hearing as did **Representative Jeff Miller** (1st District, Florida). **Senator John McCain** stated he was "absolutely delighted" with Day's presentation of the case.

It appears apparent to all, except perhaps to the Department of Justice, that the court is suggesting the United States Government cease fighting her warriors and right the wrong.


Government Estimates Cost at \$15 Billion

Day also noted that the court did not seem too impressed with the government's claim that this order could cost the U.S. some \$15 billion dollars for the 1,500,000 WWII/Korean retirees/veterans. Bud says that the Little Tucker statute caps each




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